

perhaps have been good under a series of auspicious circumstances ; but the glory had been to be victoriously good against malignant ones. Moses lost none of his generous concern for a people, on whom *you* would have invoked the waters of Noah or the fires of Sodom to return ; and that Greater than Moses, who endured from men such a match\* less excess of injustice, while for their sake alone he sojourned and suffered on earth, was not alienated to misanthropy, in his life, or at his death.

A *second* sketch might exhibit external circumstances not producing any effect more serious than an intellectual stagnation. When it was concluded, your reflection might be, if I did not know, that mental freedom is a dangerous thing, peculiarly in situations where the possessor would feel it a singular attainment; and if I did not prefer even the quiescence of unexamining belief, when tolerably right in the most material points, to the indifference or scepticism which feels no assurance or no importance in any belief, or to the weak presumption that darts into the newest and most daring opinions as *therefore* true—I should deplore that your life was destined to preserve its sedate course so entirely un-animated by the intellectual novelties of the age, the agitations of ever-moving opinion ; and under the habitual and exclusive influence of one individual, worthy perhaps and in a certain degree sensible, but of contracted views, whom you have been taught and accustomed to regard as the comprehensive repository of all the truth requisite for you to know, and from whom you have derived, as some of your chief acquisitions, a contented assurance that the trouble of inquiry is needless, and a superstitious horror of innovation, without even knowing what points are threatened by it.

At the end of *another's* disclosure, you would say, How unfortunate, that you could not believe there might be respectable and valuable men, who were not born to be wits or poets. And how unfortunate were those first evenings that you were privileged to listen to a company of men, who could say more fine things in an hour than their biographers will be able, even with the customary aid of laudatory fiction, to record them to have *done* in the whole space of life. It was then you discovered that *you* too were of the progeny of Apollo, and that you had been